The Life and Literary Works of Mrs. Augustus Craven née la Ferronnays.

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Biographical Sketch.

PAULINE MARIE ARMANDE AGLAÉ FERRON DE LA FERRONNAYS was born at 36, Manchester Street, London, on April 12, 1808, and baptized in the French Church, King Street, Portman Square, London. Her parents had emigrated to England in 1805, and both were members of historic French families. Auguste Ferron, Comte de la Ferronnays[1] married Mlle. Marie Charlotte de Montsoreau; the issue of this marriage was eleven children, Pauline being the eldest daughter.

The la Ferronnays were attached by the ties of personal friendship to the Duc de Berri, while the sincerest loyalty bound them to the latter's father, who subsequently became Charles X. of France. After the restoration of the Bourbon line, an apartment in the Tuileries was granted to the la Ferronnays family. But when fortune seemed to smile most favourably upon them, a hasty remark made by the Duc de Berri wounded his friend so deeply that he and his family left the Tuileries immediately, never to return again as residents. The Duke's offer to cross swords with his whilom friend was wisely refused by the latter. As a consequence of the Revolution M. de la Ferronnays had lost nearly all his estates, and as the compensation for the numerous *émigrés* had not yet been allotted, this abandonment of his position at Court was a serious sacrifice both for himself and family. According to the "Edinburgh Review," vol. clxxxi, p. 317, the ludicrous cause of the quarrel was a remark about baby's clothes! Secretly, however, the Duc de Berri urged his friend's claims so successfully, that the latter

[1] *Cf.* "Nouvelle Biographie Générale" (Paris, 1855), vol. xxviii, p. 723; and "Biographie Universelle" (Paris), vol. xiv, p. 24: "Dans la Chesnaye des Bois et le *Nobiliaire de Bretagne* on trouve la mention d'un Payen Feron, qui était à la croisade de 1248: son nom et ses armes figurent à Versailles dans la salle des croisades, cet écusson est encore celui des la Ferronnays; mais ils font remonter leur origine à des temps plus reculés."

was appointed successively Ambassador to the Danish and Russian courts. Thus it came about, that Pauline de la Ferronnays gathered experiences and recollections of the pomp and brilliance of the great northern court, memories which remained green to the end of her life.

The year 1827 found the family again in Paris with the elder la Ferronnays officiating as Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Pauline enjoying the advantages of intercourse with the highest circles of France. For reasons of health her father resigned his *portfeuille* in 1828, accepting instead the position of Ambassador to the Court at Rome, in which city the family settled early in the year 1829.

Pauline belonged to a pious Catholic family, and the strong religious bent which she received in her early years, and which remained the most prominent trait in her character, may be aptly illustrated by her description of a visit to the Catacombs in 1830: "We left the Catacombs by the stair that had been used by the Christians. When I was on its steps the different impressions I had received in succession, broke on me in their fulness. The steps were the same as those the martyrs trod on their way to death. I longed to stay and weep without stint. Then I thought that the young girls, who went up those slopes to die heroically, saw me from their height in heaven, and prayed for me who was so little like them. My soul overflowed with thoughts, so that I could not resist the satisfaction of kissing those sacred stones before I returned to the church."[1]

The family fortunes were soon clouded by misfortunes. During a visit to Naples the intelligence arrived of the overthrow of the dynasty on July 28, 1830, and dashed their happy hopes to the ground. M. de la Ferronnays could have remained in the service of the new government, had he liked to do so. But despising to sacrifice his principles together with his allegiance to the House of Bourbon, he resigned, thus bringing himself and family face to face with comparative poverty. He settled at Castellamare, near Naples, where their social life turned out,

[1] Mrs. M. C. Bishop, "Memoir of Mrs. Augustus Craven," p. 11.

happily, to be less circumscribed than they had at first been led to fear. Although their sources of income had never been quite stable, they were now, however, sensibly curtailed. At that time Sir Walter Scott was sojourning in Naples, hoping to recruit his shattered health. In his diary he mentions different occasions on which he met the la Ferronnays family, in which Pauline too receives a brief notice.[1]

From 1832 till 1834 the theme which engrossed the thoughts of the family was the singularly romantic attachment of Albert de la Ferronnays to Alexandrine d'Alopeus. This romance afterwards became the inspiring motive of the "Récit d'une Sœur." During the same period — in 1833 — Pauline made the acquaintance of Mr. Augustus Craven,[2] a promising young attaché stationed in the British Legation at Naples. In spite of his being a Protestant, and in spite of the ancient lineage of her family, her parents looked with approval upon their union, which took place on August 24, 1834. A few days later her husband formally renounced the Protestant faith, and completed the estrangement which had sprung up between the elder Craven and himself. The marriage is also noteworthy as showing the remarkable extent to which this ancient French family had broken with the traditions of their caste. Instead of having her marriage arranged for her in early years under the *dot* system, we find Pauline in her twenty-fifth year allowed to choose for herself, and then a man of unknown parentage. The bridegroom's father, however, showed his keen disapproval of the match by making his son only a modest allowance of £550 yearly.

Up to this point and for some thirty years after her marriage, Mrs. Craven showed no inclination to devote herself to literature. A woman of great refinement, eminent education

[1] *Cf.* "Scott's Journal," p. 876. Edition 1891.

[2] Mr. Augustus Craven was the only son of Mr. Keppel Craven. (*Cf.* "Dict. Nat. Biography," vol. xiii, p. 42). The latter was the youngest son of the last Margravine of Ansbach from her first marriage with Earl Craven. Her grandson, Augustus, was born in 1806, but the name and personality of his mother has remained an impenetrable mystery.

united with cleverness and tact, and possessing an unusual knowledge of men and things, she seemed splendidly fitted to be the helpmate of a young diplomat standing on the threshold of his career. But that career was destined never to be realised. After having been engaged as attaché successively in Lisbon, Brussels, and Stuttgart, Mr. Craven was, in 1851, as far from success in his profession as ever. They had been welcomed in the highest circles of European society and Mrs. Craven had gained a reputation both on the Continent and in England as a woman of great wit and culture. They were received into the oldest and most exclusive of English families, which opportunities Mrs. Craven no doubt utilised to endeavour to further her husband's interests, but without avail, and the much desired promotion never came. This want of success led Mr. Craven, on the death of his father in 1851, to immediately resign his post in Württemberg and return to England in the hope of making his mark in the world of politics. Having taken a town-house in London both threw themselves with great ardour into the multiplicity of interests connected with English society life. Mr. Craven was chosen as candidate in the Whig interest for Dublin, only to be defeated at the polls. The disappointment was bitter and finally extinguished their hopes of his obtaining fame in the House of Commons. Still, this period up to the year 1859 must be considered as the most brilliant in Mrs. Craven's life. Freed from financial cares by the inheritance of a palace in Naples as well as a large portion of his father's fortune, Mr. Craven was able to enjoy the benefits of his social position. His wife became one of the brilliant figures of society, knowing everybody worth knowing and corresponding with many of the most interesting personages of Europe. It has been said that Lord Palmerston spoke of her as "the cleverest woman whom he had ever met."[1] In spite of all this, she found the entrance to England's political life just as impossible for her husband as promotion in the diplomatic world had been. This may be ascribed partly to

[1] *Cf.* "Edinburgh Review," vol. clxxxi, p. 325.

the fact that they were Catholics—and during the middle of the last century feeling in England had been excited to great bitterness against the so-called "popish aggression"—partly to Mr. Craven's lack of really great talent, and lastly to their inadequate knowledge of England and the English.

Although this period may be considered as the crown of Pauline's long life, we must return to the years immediately before and after her marriage for that of idyllic happiness. The circle of friends only remained complete for a short time, and the records of her family from 1836 to 1850 are most easily followed on the gravestones which they left behind them. As related in the "Récit d'une Sœur," Albert de la Ferronnays died of consumption in 1836. A double bereavement occurred in 1842, when Pauline's father died in Rome and her sister Eugenie—like Albert—fell a victim to consumption. Eugenie's last words: "Je crois, j'aime, j'espère, je me repens," provided Mrs. Craven with a motto for the rest of her life. In the following year her sister Olga died in the Cravens' home at Brussels, and in 1848 she lost her mother and her sister-in-law Alexandrine.

A devout member of the Catholic Church, Mrs. Craven had much of the mystic and spiritual in her character, which sometimes bordered on the superstitious. Two incidents will suffice to illustrate this point. Her absolute belief in the miraculous conversion of the young Jew, M. Ratisbonne, while standing in the church Saint-Andrea delle Fratte at Rome, in which the body of her father was awaiting interment;[1] the miraculous healing of her friend Madame Neville through lying all night—after the physician had pronounced her case hopeless—on the grave of St. Mechitar in the Convent of St. Lazare, Venice.[2] But this half-visionary colouring which pervaded her intellectual life, together with some little outbursts of impatience, or rather intolerance,[3] only lend a new charm to

[1] *Cf.* "Récit d'une Sœur," vol. ii, p. 312.

[2] *Cf.* "Natalie Narischkin," Paris, 1899, p. 184.

[3] "Truth! that mighty power which I worship, which is the substance of the Catholic creed, and which no other religion possesses." (Mrs. Bishop's "Memoir," p. 151.)

her attractive personality. Generally, however, we find Pauline Craven tolerant in religion, broad-minded in political matters, and a burning philanthropist in social questions, yet everywhere and at all times filled with sincere and ardent piety.[1] When she erred, or seemed to err, against the rules of toleration or moderation one can always find excuse for her in the pure sincerity of her convictions. Still, notwithstanding her breadth of culture, her knowledge of men and books, one gains the opinion in studying her life and works—and one cannot get rid of this opinion—that her religion, instead of being a portion of her philosophical view of the universe, includes and limits all her intellectual activities. In other words, that her views on political and social questions, on man and nature, are all circumscribed by the limits of her religious creed.

Contemporary with the Cravens' brilliant social life in England, their Palazzino Chiatamone in Naples was playing a leading part in Neapolitan society. Distinguished men from most European countries were present at her social functions, and amateur theatricals were given in her *salon* to provide funds for the poor of Naples. Yet underneath the successes in the social world, a cry of pain and disappointment sometimes escaped her, showing that her husband's practical exclusion from the world of action in which he had longed to figure was still a sorrow to them both.[2] A great deal might be written about their sojourn in Italy but want of space forbids more than this passing mention. It was the period of Italy's struggle for unity and freedom, and Mrs. Craven's sympathies,

[1] *Cf.* "Edinburgh Review," vol. clxxxi, p. 316: "Coming from the very *fine fleur* of that French society at a period more unlike the present than in our steadier order we can well understand, profoundly pious, brilliantly *mondaine*, at home in half the courts of Europe and in all the convents, with all the wit and logic of France in her talk, and the mystic worship of a devout Catholic in her heart, Pauline de la Ferronnays in herself is more interesting than anything she has produced or anything that could be said about her; for words have to follow one line at a time, and she was half a dozen different things at the same moment, flashing like the facets of a diamond from the point of view at which you looked at her."

[2] Terese F. F. Ravaschieri, "Paolina Craven e la sua famiglia," pp. 201—2.

although on the side of the aspirations of the people, were not a little wounded at the loss of temporal power to the Holy See. Her opinion of the state of Naples she expressed in no equivocal manner. In 1855 it was to her "the only spot on the earth where it is true pain to live."[1] But liberalism to Mrs. Craven was as a second nature; besides, her political acumen taught her that the movement was an upward and forward one.[2] Although her heart and judgment were on the side of the Catholic Church in Italy, this was by no means the case in respect to the priesthood in Ireland during the troublous years in which the "Home Rule" question agitated the politics of that country. We must credit her with being one of the very few French people who have displayed judgment and insight in Irish affairs. Not that she was unable to feel with the Irish in their just longing for a more extended liberty, rather she believed, that the methods employed were those which could only retard the march of liberty, added to which the anathema and excommunications hurled about by the representatives of the Catholic Church in Ireland led her to express the opinion that the Irish Catholics must be of a different order to those found in other parts of the world.[3]

Still more remarkable was the position taken up by Mrs. Craven with regard to the great upheaval caused by the quarrel between France and Germany. Notwithstanding her birth on British soil and her English husband; in spite of the fact that the greater part of her life up till 1870 had been spent in other lands than France, it would be impossible to trace any signs of weakening in her national sentiment. At all times keenly alive to her country's national failings, and never fearing to expose them in the strongest terms, yet she was always French to the core. Therefore her views on that

[1] Mrs. Bishop's "Memoir," p. 66.

[2] Mrs. Bishop's "Memoir," pp. 159—160. "I am convinced of the consistency and reality of the national movement which is shaping the new Italy. I think its formation possible, and I hope to see it, but I feel also that it must receive pardon from the church."

[3] Mrs. Bishop's "Memoir," p. 443.

great national struggle command respectful attention. From the beginning she foretold disaster to the armies of France, "for the double reason that she was fighting in a bad cause, (that is without a cause), and fighting against a formidable adversary".[1] Even she, however, had not foreseen the awful cataclasm which overtook her native land, and in spite of the hope that a new and purified France would arise from the ruins, Mrs. Craven was deeply depressed by the course events were taking.[2] In November, 1870, she became the guest of the Duchess of Hamilton in the Palais Stephanie, Baden, from where she had renewed opportunities of observing the conquerors of France, and the hearty appreciation of the German people, which we find in a letter[3] written and dated from the Palais Stephanie, in March, 1871, to the Duchess Ravaschieri, displays, not a lack of patriotism on the part of Pauline Craven, but an objectivity of intellect and liberality of heart which compel our esteem.

Early in the sixties fresh troubles had to be encountered by Mr. and Mrs. Craven, and these were all the more unexpected as they were of a financial nature. Mr. Craven had involved himself in speculations in Italian enterprises, and the consequent heavy losses absorbed the whole of his fortune. These struggles lasted during many years, and finally made it necessary for them to sell their two Italian homes (Palazzino Chiatamone in Naples, and Castagneto in Cava). Further, it compelled Mrs. Craven to devote herself to literature and her husband to petition the government of Bavaria to grant him the appanage promised to his grandmother in 1806.[4] Fortunately the latter

[1] Mrs. Bishop's "Memoir," p. 201.

[2] T. F. Ravaschieri, "Paolina Craven," p. 326: "Teresa mia, preghiamo, preghiamo! Io ho l'animo assai bujo. Tanta leggerezza da una parte, e tanta serietà di propositi dall' altra, mi pongono in animo un gran senso di sconforto. Oh Dio! parmi che nulla di bene abbia a venire alla Francia da questa insensata guerra!"

[3] T. F. Ravaschieri, "Paolina Craven", p. 340.

[4] *Cf.* Hans Ley, Die litterarische Tätigkeit der Lady Craven, p. 13: „Von 1806 ab sollte nämlich laut Vertrag die Witwe jährlich 20000 fl. rhein. erhalten; da aber 1806 Ansbach an Bayern kam, entstand ein Streit, ob Preußen oder

was in a measure successful, while Mrs. Craven's books met with good success, so that her publisher (M. Didier, Paris) was able in 1880 to make her an annuity of £240 for life. Nevertheless, the brilliant period was at an end, and in comparison to that earlier time one might say that financial cares were hovering on the horizon for the rest of her life.

Resuming the thread of her biography where Pauline Craven's literary career began, we learn from Mrs. Bishop's "Memoir," that Pauline had worked for some twelve years on the "Récit d'une Sœur" before its publication in 1865. In that year only a limited number had been printed for private circulation,—after the objections of several interested persons had been overcome,[1]—and the real publication followed in January, 1866. The work met with instant success and was crowned by the *Académie française* in the following year. The Secretary of the *Académie* in reporting on the book declared: "It may perhaps not be a work of literary art, but its value will possibly seem all the greater." This judgment in a trite manner expresses much truth. In the strict sense of the word the "Reçit" is not a literary production. It is a human document taken direct from life, palpitating with the joys and sorrows of real individuals, and pulsating with the pathos and interest of a great love. Mrs. Craven was the collector and arranger of the materials, in short its editress. Yet her claim to enduring fame will rest principally on this book alone, and the almost immediate effect of its publication was to make Mrs. Craven's name known to the literary world of France, England and Germany. But only with the publication of "Anne Séverin," in 1868, may her career in the world of letters be said to have really begun.

The last twenty years of Mrs. Craven's life, in which

Bayern die Summe zu bezahlen habe. Trotz vieler Bittschriften und sonstiger Schritte erhielt weder Lady Craven noch ihr Sohn Keppel etwas. Erst i. J. 1874 wurde durch Beschluß der bayerischen Kammer vom 14. Juli dem Augustus Craven, dem Sohne des i. J. 1851 verstorbenen Keppel Craven, auf Lebenszeit eine Abfindungssumme von jährlich 7000 fl. bewilligt."

[1] Mrs. Bishop's "Memoir," pp. 173—4.

period her literary activity falls, were spent almost entirely in Paris. They experienced no little difficulty in fitting themselves into their more circumscribed mode of life. Still, Pauline must have found diversion as well as joy in addressing a large public through her romances and biographies of departed friends. From her correspondence we learn, that, although they had an apartment in Paris, frequent visits were made to the homes of their friends both in and out of France. If Pauline Craven needed consolation, there is no doubt that she sought and found it, in what had been the mainstay of her long life, *i.e.* in her unwavering faith in the goodness and wisdom of God. Gaps arose in the ranks of her friends, and links with her brilliant past disappeared with advancing age, till in 1884 Augustus Craven[1] died during a sojourn at Monabri, near Geneva. But before the end of her life was reached another and still bitterer trial had to be encountered. On June 5, 1890, she was struck with paralysis, which left her an invalid, robbed even of the power of speech, till released by death on April 1, 1891.[2] Several obituary notices appeared in the Paris press, and quite fittingly the most dignified and comprehensive was written by Camille Alfred vicomte de Meaux in "Le Correspondant," wherein most of her own work had first appeared. The following extracts are taken from this article:[3] "A la bonne grâce, aux nobles instincts qu'elle tenait d'un autre siècle, elle joignait un goût très vif pour les progrès modernes. Par générosité naturelle, par charité chrétienne envers son temps, elle lui pardonnait beaucoup. Dans les

[1] Augustus Craven's publications included an English translation of the "Life of Comte de Falloux"; a French translation of Queen Victoria's "Life of the Prince Consort"; and a biography of Lord Palmerston, in French. For an appreciation of his character, *cf.* T. F. Ravaschieri, "Paolina Craven," pp. 257—58.

[2] "Edinburgh Review," p. 345: "On April 1, 1891, the ill-luck and the frequent trials came to an end, and a few days after she rejoined the many whom she had loved and lost, at Boury, where a few years before her always loving and faithful husband had also been laid. This world could scarcely have given more to a woman than was given to her—youth, love, happiness, reputation, sorrow, trouble, and anguish, and in the end an oblivion at which she was able to smile."

[3] "Le Correspondant," April 10, 1891, pp. 194—200.

évènements qui se déroulaient devant elle, dans les hommes qui y jouaient un rôle, elle cherchait le bien plus volontiers que le mal. Elle eut de la sorte des condescendances dont parfois ses meilleurs amis s'étonnèrent; et jamais, sans doute, on ne vit une personne plus fidèle au fond du cœur aux souvenirs du passé, sourire avec plus de bienveillance à l'avenir.

* * * * *

C'est à ce second étage de la rue Barbet-de-Jouy que je la retrouve, d'abord à côté de son mari, acceptant d'un cœur paisible une vieillesse dépouillée de bien des joies, mais embellie par les tendres soins qu'ils se rendaient l'un à l'autre; puis, demeurée seule, charmante encore sous son bonnet de veuve et ses cheveux blanchis, avec ses traits imposants qu'animait la vivacité des pensées et des émotions, son séduisant sourire, ses grands yeux dont l'âge n'avait pas éteint l'incomparable éclat, sa mise toujours soignée, ses manières exquises, sa parole pénétrante.

* * * * *

Voilà donc où s'est achevée la vieillesse de Mme. Craven; voilà comment elle a prié et travaillé jusqu'au seuil de son éternité; comment, survivant à la plupart de ses contemporains et n'ayant jamais eu d'enfants, elle a connu la solitude. Solitude interrompue pourtant à certaines heures par les visiteurs de tout âge, de tout pays, de toute condition, qu'attiraient soit d'anciens souvenirs de famille ou d'amitié, soit sa renommée littéraire, et que retenait l'irrésistible séduction de son entretien.

* * * * *

Dans sa longue carrière elle a mené la vie du monde, la vie des lettres et la vie chrétienne, et dans ces trois vies si différentes elle a pareillement excellé, rare exemple et peut-être inimitable d'une harmonie surnaturelle entre la beauté du corps, la beauté de l'esprit et la beauté de l'âme."

As an authoress Mrs. Craven was fairly prolific, having published no fewer than eighteen books and pamphlets besides magazine articles. Her works may be classified as follows: A. Biographical; B. Romantic; C. Miscellaneous.

A. Biographical.

1. Récit d'une Sœur.[1]

Dealing with her works in chronological order, this book, with which she made her *début* in 1866, is naturally the first to be considered. As is remarked in the full title the "Récit" contains "souvenirs de famille," and its perusal shows Mrs. Craven's rôle to have been that of compiler. It was a daring experiment to make public so many intimate details of family life and history, but still one which was amply justified by its success.

In the first volume the love story of Albert de la Ferronnays and Alexandrine d'Alopeus is told in extracts from their diaries and in selections from the correspondence which passed between them personally, as well as letters written by other members and friends of the family. Further, Mrs. Craven made extensive use of a private manuscript written by Alexandrine: "Notre Amour et notre Vie." The authoress has pieced these materials together with artistic feeling and literary taste. Thus the narrative suffers in no way as regards continuity, and seemingly heterogeneous materials have been worked up to present an even but striking picture, from which two noble characters stand out in bold relief.

Albert de la Ferronnays, a young man of ardent poetic and idealistic inclinations, met Alexandrine early in the year 1832, fell in love with her, and won her affections in return. The scene of the romance is principally in Naples and its environs. After many hopes and fears their respective parents

[1] Published by Didier et Cie, Paris, 1866. The fiftieth edition appeared in 1906.

consented to their union, although M. de la Ferronnays was unable to make his son any pecuniary allowance. The marriage took place on April 17, 1834.

After tracing the story to this seeming climax, Mrs. Craven pauses to write, as it were, an introduction to the wedded life of these lofty souls. She casts a picture showing the felicity and family love which reigned between the different members of the family; the high hopes and splendid promise of a happy future for the young couple. But even in those early days the storm-cloud made its appearance on the heaven of their joy. Only ten days after the marriage Alexandrine saw her husband hastily place a handkerchief to his lips and withdraw it stained with blood! This dread sign raised forebodings which were painfully fulfilled. After a winter spent in Pisa, where they were visited by Albert's greatest friend, the Comte de Montalembert, they determined to take a voyage through the Mediterranean to Odessa, and thence for several days' journey inland to the castle of Prince Lapoukhyn.[1] After an uneventful journey, which apparently had a beneficial effect on the young man's health, they arrived at the castle of Korsen, in Southern Russia. The letters and diary extracts recording the impressions and experiences of their journey, and the return by the overland route, are of great interest. At Korsen any hopes of Albert's recovery which may have been cherished were dashed to the ground. A sudden but severe attack of hæmorrhage in the lungs, followed by the difficulties and hardships of the succeeding journey *via* Vienna to Venice, placed the seal of death upon him. During the ensuing winter the disease gained ground rapidly, and shortly after his wife's secession from the Lutheran to the Catholic church, Albert de la Ferronnays died at Paris on June 29, 1836. This last scene in a romantic but very human tragedy is best described in the words of the young widow herself: "A six heures (il était alors placé dans un fauteuil près de la fenêtre ouverte) je vis, j'entendis que le moment était venu . . . . . Alors je

[1] Madame A. de la Ferronnays' step-father.

sentis venir en moi une force telle que rien ne m'eût arrachée de ma place à genoux à côté de lui. Ma sœur Eugénie vint près de moi. Son père était à genoux de l'autre côté, sa pauvre mère debout, penchée sur sa tête, l'abbé Martin à côté d'elle. Oh! mon Dieu! il n'y eut plus d'autres paroles que celles de son père, paroles toutes de bénédiction, sublime accompagnement de l'agonie d'un fils: 'Toi qui ne nous as jamais affligés .... le meilleur des enfants, sois béni! Va, m'entends—tu encore? Tu regardes ton Alexandrine (ses yeux déjà fixés s'étaient tournés vers moi), tu la bénis aussi!'

La sœur disait les litanies des agonisants. Et moi, sa femme!... je sentis ce que je n'aurais jamais imaginé, je sentis que la mort était le bonheur! et je disais intérieurement: *Maintenant, Jésus, le paradis pour lui!*

L'abbé Martin commença les paroles de l'absolution dernière, et l'âme d'Albert s'envola avant qu'elles fussent achevées!"[1]

Volume II. contains more correspondence between the members of the family, as well as many letters written by Comte de Montalembert, Abbé Gerbet, etc.

Besides this, extracts are given from the diaries of Alexandrine, Mrs. Craven, and the latter's younger sister Olga. In this manner the story of Eugenie's marriage with Comte Adrien de Mun in 1838 is unfolded and her early death at Palermo in 1842. This latter event had been shortly preceded by M. de la Ferronnay's death at Rome. These two gaps in the family circle were followed by yet another—the above-mentioned Olga dying in the home of Mrs. Craven at Brussels, where her husband was attached to the British Legation. The correspondence and diary of Alexandrine lose none of their interest but gain an additional charm in the sketches in which they abound from her various journeys in Holland, Germany, Austria, etc.

Thus her impressions of a church service on August 1, 1836, at Kreuznach: "Quel peuple religieux que ce peuple

[1] "Récit d'une Sœur," vol. i, pp. 422—3.

allemand! Une grande église toute remplie, tout le monde dans un si profond recueillement! Puis ces beaux chants unanimes, avec des voix si justes et si pieuses; une manière si grave de prendre de l'eau bénite; pas de moquerie, ni d'incrédulité sur une seule figure. Je me suis sentie parmi des frères et des sœurs, et j'aurais, je le crois, trouvé de la sympathie dans chacun d'eux. La plupart étaient de bons paysans."[1]

In 1838, during one of her visits to Germany, her brother, an officer in the Russian army, fell into disgrace and, after being degraded, was sent to the Caucasus. Alexandrine's first impulse was to brave the many dangers involved in order to beseech the Czar personally for clemency towards her brother. The advice of friends, however, prevented her from taking this daring course, which was perhaps as well, for the Russian monarch was at that time bitterly incensed against everything French or Catholic. Nevertheless, M. de la Ferronnays, who happened just then to be in Tœplitz, ventured to broach the subject to his Majesty. The latter replied: "*La princesse Lapoukhyn est bien malheureuse en enfants!*" Mon père, alors avec quelque vivacité, rappela à l'empereur que la fille de la princesse était sa propre belle-fille, et demanda si c'était là un grief à ses yeux. "Non, non, dit l'empereur, ce n'est pas cela." Et il ajouta même quelques paroles flatteuses pour Alexandrine. "*Mais*, continua-t-il, *je déteste ces changements de religion, ce sont des affaires de prêtres qui me déplaisent.*"[2]

In a letter written by Alexandrine to Montalembert in August, 1837, we learn that the latter had the intention of writing the story of Albert and Alexandrine. After briefly sketching her own life she concluded with the words: "Je ne crains pas de vous avoir ennuyé en vous faisant ce petit résumé d'une vie que vous voulez écrire. J'en ai parlé à ma belle-mère, qui disait seulement, avant d'avoir entendu que

[1] "Récit d'une Sœur," vol. ii, p. 34.

[2] "Recit d'une Sœur," vol. ii, p. 215.

c'était *pour dans dix ans d'ici*, qu'il ne faudrait pas mettre les noms. Nous avons le temps de penser à cela."[1]

Finally, Alexandrine settled in Paris, devoting her time and means to the alleviation of the misery existing among the poor of that city. These self-sacrificing labours led to her death in 1848, and her mother-in-law only outlived her by a few months. She died while visiting the Cravens at Baden in November of that year.

The sublime passion which bound Alexandrine to her dead husband finds its happiest expression in the conversation between her and Pauline Craven. It ends as follows: "Mais si on remettait là, devant toi, la vie telle que tu l'avais rêvée avec Albert, et qu'on te la promît pour de longues années? Elle répondit sans hésiter: 'Je ne la reprendrais pas!'

"Ce fut là notre dernière conversation en ce monde. C'est debout devant ce banc, l'air animé, les yeux au ciel, cette petite fleur de jasmin à la main, qu'elle m'apparaît toujours, lorsque je cherche à la faire revivre dans ma mémoire telle que je la vis, pour ne plus la revoir ici-bas."[2]

Mrs. Craven's task ended with Alexandrine's death and burial. Besides giving to the world living portraits of those near and dear to herself, Mrs. Craven has given us in the "Récit d'une Sœur" an exquisite picture of family life and an inspiring example of conjugal love.[3]

[1] "Récit d'une Sœur," vol. ii, p. 147. In a footnote to this letter found on the same page Mrs. Craven mentions this as her justification for having published these family memoirs: "Cette lettre me semble être la sanction la plus complète du travail que j'ai entrepris. Sans doute Alexandrine le confiait alors à un autre, qui s'en fût acquitté avec autant de respect et de sympathie et beaucoup plus de talent que moi. Mais trente années au lieu de dix sont écoulées et sa vie a été vouée à d'autres œuvres. Je crois donc qu'en prenant aujourd'hui sa place, j'ai plutôt accompli qu'enfreint la volonté de celle qui lui adressait ainsi le résumé du récit que l'on a lu dans le volume précédent."

[2] "Récit d'une Sœur," vol. ii, pp. 391—394.

[3] Aubrey de Vere wrote two sonnets on this book. *Cf.* "In Antar and Lara and other Poems," 1877, p. 327.

Le Récit d'une Soeur.

Whence is the music? minstrel see we none;
Yet soft as waves that, surge succeeding surge,

2. Adélaïde Capece Minutolo.[1]

In 1869 a Neapolitan friend of Mrs. Craven died, and setting aside other work she wrote a short memoir of Adélaïde Capece Minutolo. This lady, who belonged to the illustrious house of Canosa, lived in a villa at Naples, which had been presented to the Margravine of Ansbach by King Ferdinand I. in 1818. The sisters Minutolo lived together and were intimate friends of the authoress, the two families being especially closely connected in philanthropic work for benefiting the poor of Naples. This modest sketch, which is not more than a number of letters from Donna Adélaïde to her nieces and sisters, contains little original comment from Mrs. Craven, although it does contain an interesting opinion on the quarrel between the Italian state and the Vatican: "Lorsque vint ce jour qui, hélas! ne se fit point attendre, où l'Italie insensée et ingrate porta une main violente sur les biens de l'Église, et éleva contre son chef auguste une voix impie et sur Rome une arrogante prétention, ceux-là souffrirent plus que les autres. Je pourrais presque dire qu'ils souffrirent seuls, car les partisans d'autres opinions, servis par les excès et les fautes de l'Italie, trouvaient dans ce résultat un dédommagement à ces fautes, à ces excès eux-mêmes. J'ose donc répéter, les cœurs qui véritablement saignèrent, ce furent ceux qui aiment leur patrie et partageant un grand nombre de ses vœux aimaient mille fois plus qu'elle encore leur foi, leur Église et leur Dieu, et

> Roll forward, now subside, anon emerge,
> Upheaved in glory o'er a setting sun,
> Those beatific harmonies sweep on!
> O'er earth they sweep from heaven's remotest verge,
> Triumphant hymeneal hymn and dirge
> Blending in everlasting unison.
> Whence is the music? Stranger! these were they
> That great in love, by love unvanquished proved:
> These were true lovers, for in God they loved:
> With God these spirits rest in endless day,
> Yet still for love's behoof on wings outspread,
> Float on o'er earth, betwixt the angels and the dead!

[1] Published by Didier et Cie, Paris, 1869. The book entered its tenth edition in 1906.

qui comprenaient avec une inexprimable angoisse, qu'une barrière infranchissable s'élevait en ce moment entre les deux sentiments qu'il est le plus doux et le plus désirable de pouvoir ressentir ensemble. Ce fut là ce que sentit, ce que comprit, ce que souffrit Adélaïde."[1]

3. La Marquise de Mun.[2]

In 1877 a small booklet of 36 pages appeared under the above title, being an obituary notice of that lady by Mrs. Craven.

4. Le Comte de Montalembert.[2]

This biographical sketch of the champion of religious liberalism in France was prompted by the publication in England of Mrs. Margaret Oliphant's[3] "Life of Montalembert" in 1872. Concerning this work Mrs. Craven had contributed some articles to "Le Correspondant," which consisted almost entirely of excerpts from the English original. It was only to be expected that she should take the deepest interest in one who had been her brother Albert's best loved friend, who had besides maintained an intimate friendship with herself during a period of forty years, and who had ably voiced her own liberal opinions with regard to church government. His death in 1870 removed another who had been a welcome guest in the la Ferronnays' family circle during the thirties, and severed another link with the authoress's romantic past. Although the book contains little that is original, either in form or material, from Mrs. Craven's pen, yet it supplies an instructive picture of Montalembert in his life-long political and religious battles and of his associations with notable contemporaries, especially with Daniel O'Connell[4] during Montalembert's visit to Ireland in his twenty-first year. The words penned a few months before his death strike a note of sadness, which most certainly found an echo in the heart of Madame Craven: "Les années

[1] Adelaïde Capece Minutolo, pp. 74, 75.

[2] Published by Didier et Cie, Paris, 1872.

[3] Margaret Oliphant (1828—1897). *Cf.* "Dict. Nat. Biography," Supplement.

[4] Irish Politician (1775—1847). *Cf.* "Dict. Nat. Biography," vol. xli, 371—389.

que j'ai passées au Corps législatif de 1852 à 1857 sont certainement les plus tristes et les plus méritoires de toute ma vie. Les douleurs matérielles que l'implacable maladie m'a fait connaître depuis lors ne sont rien auprès des angoisses morales que j'ai traversées pendant cette sombre et affreuse période. Je défendais seul alors, j'ose le dire, l'honneur et la liberté de la France, sans que personne m'en sût le moindre gré, sans que personne eût l'air de s'en apercevoir dans le public. Je combattais en désespéré dans une cave sans air ni lumière."[1]

As the subject of the biography is one which claimed Mrs. Craven's undivided sympathy, it is, perhaps, to be regretted that she did not attempt an entirely original and independent work on the same subject.

5. La Sœur Natalie Narischkin.[2]

This work, which is also more pretentious in size—it contains 438 pages—is the first of Mrs. Craven's biographical works written in the usual narrative form and extracts from correspondence, etc., made subservient to the story of Natalie Narischkin's life. This young Russian lady had made the acquaintance of the la Ferronnays in Italy and had been the personal friend of the authoress's younger sister Olga. After the latter's death her friend became a member of the Roman Catholic church, a step which caused practically an estrangement between herself and her family, as well as banning her from the Russian court. She settled, therefore, in Paris and later entered the cloister of Rue St. Guillaume, Paris, of which she became Mother Superior, dying there amid an odour of sanctity in 1874. Mrs. Craven published her biography in the following year, and in dedicating it to Mme. la Princesse de Sayn-Wittgenstein remarks: "C'est vous qui, la première, m'avez encouragée à les écrire." The book is the record of a pious life strongly tinged with the asceticism of the cloister. As a literary effort it is to a large extent marred by religious bias.

[1] "Le Comte de Montalembert," p. 151.

[2] Published by Didier et Cie, Paris, 1875. Now in its thirteenth edition.

Furthermore, the frustrated attempt of the sisters la Ferronnays, assisted by their sister-in-law Alexandrine, to abduct the two Narischkin girls from their parental control, in order that they might secretly take the oath of allegiance to the Roman church, deserves all the condemnation which the participators themselves afterwards bestowed upon it.

6. Le Travail d'une Ame.[1]

In the June of 1876 the Duchess of Norfolk gave a little book entitled "Unravelled Convictions" to Mrs. Craven. The same had been published anonymously, but was in reality the work of Lady Amabel, second daughter of the seventh Earl Cowper. The young authoress endeavoured to give a lucid account of her secession to the Roman Catholic faith, doubtless with the intention of leading others along the same path. Such psychological autobiographies are exposed to the charge of egotism, besides which it is difficult to estimate satisfactorily their critical value. Lady Amabel records that mistrust of the Anglican creed had increased during some years in her mind till the conviction overwhelmed her while sitting in a Parisian church, that truth and permanent happiness were only to be found in the Roman church. This impression was so strengthened during the subsequent journey through France by the apparent reality of French piety, that after returning to England the lady became an avowed Catholic. One may describe the original, and hence the French adaptation too, as a series of attempted flights by an inexperienced intellect into the higher realms of religious mysticism in search of "une règle de foi!"

Mrs. Craven displayed a keen relish in writing on the subject of conversion to the Roman faith. Thus we find no fewer than three subjects of her biographical sketches were converts—without mentioning the case of Alexandrine in the "Récit d'une Sœur." Some of her gibes at the Church of England[2] are interesting even if they display an amusing lack

[1] Published by Didier et Cie, Paris, 1877.

[2] "Il suffit d'ailleurs de la regarder aujourd'hui, cette Église d'Angleterre, cette arche du sixième siècle vacillante, et faisant eau de toutes parts, incapable

of the critical faculty, and perhaps Mrs. Craven was never so naïve as when she wrote: "I have a strong conviction that the very singularity of such a work emanating from the pen of a girl of the age you were, when you wrote it, would attract the attention of many among those (so very numerous in France) who have ceased to believe anything firmly."[1]

7. La jeunesse de Fanny Kemble.[2]

Both in London and Naples Mr. and Mrs. Augustus Craven had taken much interest in amateur theatricals. In fact, in the latter city large sums of money had been obtained in this manner for the benefit of the Neapolitan poor. On one occasion Mr. Craven had acted with Fanny Kemble in the first-mentioned city, which led the great actress to pronounce him "the best amateur actor with whom she had ever acted." The friendship between the Cravens and Miss Kemble was life-long, hence it is easy to understand that the publication of Miss Kemble's "Recollections of my Girlhood" (London, 1880) attracted Mrs. Craven's liveliest interest, and induced her to publish a French adaptation of the work. Numerous letters from Miss Kemble to a girl friend, together with extensive diary extracts, form the basis of the book, which affords another example of Mrs. Craven's literary skill in so piecing them together as to produce a finished and artistic whole.

A description of the first railway journey; a conversation with George Stephenson; the tragic death of the first Duke of Wellington's political rival before the Duke's eyes, form a few of Miss Kemble's interesting reminiscences. Fanny Kemble's motive for going on the stage was to assist in repairing her

de satisfaire ceux qu'elle porte, jetant d'un côté son lest, de l'autre se laissant charger d'une foule d'objets hétérogènes et pour essayer de se relever, et de se maintenir à flot, acceptant des doctrines que ses fondateurs eussent abhorrées, et contre lesquelles ils n'ont rien dit, précisément parce qu'ils ne pouvaient prévoir qu'on pût les admettre jamais, et encore moins que leur silence pût être regardé comme une adhésion. Ce serait une folie, à propos d'une Église dans un semblable état, que d'oser parler de durée." "Le Travail d'une Âme," pp. 49, 50.

[1] Mrs. Bishop's "Memoir," p. 256.

[2] Published by Didier et Cie, Paris, 1880.

father's damaged fortunes—the result of his management of Drury Lane Theatre, the outcome of which was his financial ruin. Although she possessed wonderful dramatic talent, the stage—even the art of acting before an audience—was odious to Miss Kemble. Yet she attained great popularity together with considerable fame, especially in the representation of Shakespearean rôles. On being asked a short time before her death for her impression of Mrs. Craven, the actress replied: "She was a most sincere devout Roman Catholic. Her books were written under a strong religious feeling and with the desire of influencing persons who thought differently from her on religious questions. The beauties and support of her belief were so real to her, that her great wish was to make others see and feel them as she did."[1] The work concludes with a protest against the realism then in full vogue, the writer expressing herself emphatically against depicting one side of human life,—its ugliness, coarseness, and vulgarity. She does not question the existence of such types as those so realistically represented in modern French fiction, but concerns herself to seek everywhere types contrary to them and then setting them out in opposition,—which forms her justification of the present sketch.

8. Robert de Mun.[2]

After the death of her nephew Robert de Mun in 1887, Mrs. Craven published a pamphlet of 23 pages—addressed to the readers of "Récit d'une Sœur"—in which she sketched the life and character of her favourite sister's (Eugenie) eldest son.

9. Lady Georgiana Fullerton, sa vie et ses œuvres.[3]

With two exceptions the motive power which impelled Mrs. Craven to write her various biographies was personal friendship and esteem. Her friendship with Lady Fullerton[4]

[1] Mrs. Bishop's "Memoir," p. 297.

[2] Published in 1887 by Perrin et Cie, Paris:

[3] Published in 1888 by Perrin et Cie, Paris.

[4] *Cf.* The article on Lady Georgiana Fullerton, "Dict. Nat. Biography," vol. xx, p. 325.

dated from the period 1824—1827, in which the latter's father, Lord Granville Leveson-Gower, was British Ambassador at Paris. In point of size this is the most ambitious of our authoress's biographical works, perhaps also the most interesting. The method of compilation closely resembles that in the remaining works of this class, in as far as Mrs. Craven has threaded together a great number of letters and diary extracts with some intermingled original matter. The subject of the biography, following the example of her husband, went over to Catholicism in 1846, and thus it is not surprising that Chapters VII to IX are almost entirely devoted to the recrudescence of Catholicism in England under the style of the "Oxford Movement." "L'année 1845 avait marqué *la plus grande victoire que l'Église catholique eût remportée depuis la Réforme.* C'était en ces termes que Mr. Gladstone caractérisait alors la conversion de John Henry Newman. Il devait avoir à en enregistrer d'autres encore, parmi ses amis les plus chers. Bientôt, en effet, l'exemple de Newman, le premier et le plus grand de tous, devait être suivi par l'archidiacre Manning, et par Mr. James Hope Scott, désignés par Mr. Gladstone lui-même, l'un comme *la perle de leur clergé (Anglican)*, l'autre comme *la perle de leurs laïques*, et avec eux la pléiade dont se composa l'Oratoire à son début, sous le P. Faber, lui aussi au premier rang des illustrations de l'anglicanisme."[1]

One fault of this biography is the small amount of space devoted to Lady Fullerton's literary productions. Considering that the work runs into 550 pages of printed matter, it is certainly to be regretted that Mrs. Craven was content to spare so little for comment on her friend's numerous publications that this comment takes up only about a dozen pages of the entire book. Her first book, "Ellen Middleton," was published in 1844, and called forth a very favourable critique from Mr. W. E. Gladstone in the "English Magazine" during the same year. From

[1] Lady Georgiana Fullerton, pp. 200, 201. In a footnote on the latter page Mrs. Craven remarks: "C'est en parlant à l'auteur de ce récit en 1849 et 1850, que Mr. Gladstone se servit de ces expressions, ainsi que de celle qui vient d'être citée relativement à Newman."

that time till her death she continued to write, mostly novels. She, too, was responsible for the translation of Mrs. Craven's "Eliane." Not only is this work rich in reminiscences of travel of men and things, but it also contains letters from many prominent men and women of the nineteenth century, among whom may be cited Miss Fanny Kemble, Maria Edgeworth, Cardinals Newman and Manning, Le duc de Broglie, Charles Greville, and W. E. Gladstone.

10. Le Père Damien.[1]

This sketch appeared first in "Le Correspondant" for July 25, 1889, and was subsequently enlarged and published in book form. It is an unpretentious volume, and was, in point of fact, Mrs. Craven's last published work. When the press of the entire civilized world announced the death of Père Damien, simultaneously extolling his magnificent bravery, it is no wonder that this narrative of heroism aroused the ardent nature of our authoress—more especially as the Belgian priest was a Christian hero of the faith which ruled every action of her life.

She describes with sympathetic pen the early life and humble origin of the young man, whose brother was also a priest. A coincidence prevented his elder brother from taking up his work as a missionary, and the younger brother offering himself as a substitute was accepted and sent to the Sandwich Islands. He afterwards dedicated himself entirely to the large colony of lepers. To the fell disease of leprosy he finally became a victim, dying among the forsaken wretches whom he had so unselfishly served. Such a subject was peculiarly suited to the tastes and sympathies of Mrs. Craven, and the result is certainly one of her happiest efforts. In spite of her advanced age there is no sign of falling off in the fresh vigour of her fluent pointed style. In this, as in the works already discussed, she understood how to arouse and retain the reader's interest in the subject in hand. Her main object was ever to reveal the Christian character of those about whom she wrote, and

[1] Published in 1890 by Perrin et Cie, Paris.

within these limits she successfully portrayed real men and women, so that their lives seem to us vivid and convincing. Further, in no case does she overstep the limits permitted to a biographer in writing of the innermost life of her subjects, while the manner in which she kept her own personality in the background is in complete accord with correct literary taste. It is true that the prevailing atmosphere of her works is religious sentiment, but this always seasoned with refinement and perspicuous judgment. She concluded her sketch of Le Père Damien with the words: "En terminant ce travail, et en regrettant qu'il soit si incomplet, je dois avouer toutefois qu'il m'a été doux! Dans ce temps où tant de forces intellectuelles sont appliquées à troubler les cœurs et à affaiblir les caractères; dans ce temps de haines et de luttes, où la justice ne semble plus jamais avoir son heure; dans ce temps aussi où on se paye de tant de vains mots, et où, parmi les plus vains, en entend avec ceux de liberté et d'égalité retentir celui de *fraternité*, le plus vain de tous, il est vraiment consolant de voir se produire tout d'un coup un fait qui, pour un moment, met tout cela en action, et nous fait franchir d'un bond la distance qui sépare la phrase vide de la réalité vivante et féconde!"

B. Romantic.

The motives which led Mrs. Craven to her ventures in the world of fiction will be discussed later. Here let it suffice to examine these works and the amount of success attained by them. She published five works of fiction, all of which enjoyed great popularity in France, but their reception in England and Germany was by no means so enthusiastic.

1. Anne Séverin.[1]

This work appeared first as a serial story in "Le Correspondant," commencing in the March issue of 1867. The scene of the narrative is laid first in London, then in France, from whence it is transferred to Rome and finally concludes in France. The reader is introduced to the circles of the French *émigrées* seeking refuge on English soil during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Guillaume des Aubreys, the lover of Charlotte de Nebriant, joins himself to a conspiracy and is sent with others on a secret political mission to Paris. Before his departure he confides to the Marquis de Villiers the secret of his love for Charlotte, at the same time handing him a locket to be given to her in case he should never return. The Marquis was himself, however, an undeclared lover of the beautiful Charlotte de Nebriant. Nevertheless, it fell to his lot to hand over the locket and break the news of Guillaume's tragic death on the coast of Normandy. One of the haunts of the *émigrées* was the home of Dr. Perceval, Charlotte's stepfather. Among the numerous visitors was a young Englishman, Henri Devereux, who also loved Charlotte. But on finding his passion unrequited he left for India without ever discovering that Charlotte's half-sister Louise had hopelessly bestowed her love upon him.

Four years later Mrs. Perceval—by that time a widow—

[1] Published by Didier et Cie, Paris, 1868.

feeling the approach of death, begged de Villiers to marry her daughter. He consented if Charlotte were willing to become his wife, which proved to be the case. The marriage took place, and as the Bourbon star was again in the ascendant, the Marquis led his wife home to his paternal estates in France. As Louise was now without a home she accompanied them, a step which led to her marriage with Pierre Séverin, the steward of the de Villiers' estates. The two step-sisters had thus married men for whom they felt none of the passion of love. The results were various, for while Séverin by his innate nobility of character won his wife's heart, the Marquis, being of a morose and suspicious disposition, made it impossible for Charlotte to return his affection. Finding his wife one day with the locket in her hands, which her unhappy lover had sent to her before his death, de Villiers gave way to a violent passion and stamped the trinket under his foot in the belief that it contained a lock of the dead man's hair. His proud nature prevented him from showing his remorse, which might have brought about the mutual confidence so ardently desired by his wife, and so, mother-like, she lavished her love upon her child Guy. In like manner suspicion and misunderstanding sprang up between father and son.

To Pierre Séverin and his wife a daughter was born,—Anne, whom Mrs. Craven no doubt meant to be the central figure of the romance. She and Guy grew up together as playmates till the death of the Marquise, which leads one to expect that the chief love interest of the romance would centre round them. Such is the case, and after his father's death Guy declared his passion to the young maiden, only to receive an emphatic refusal ever to become his wife. The explanation was that Pierre Séverin, having an inkling of the love existing between the young people, had forbidden his daughter to entertain any such proposal. The old steward's apparent motive was that such a marriage, after he had nursed the de Villiers' estates back to prosperity, would be dishonest and expose him to the charge of intriguing for his personal interests.

At this point the daughter of Henri Devereux returns to Europe, and as her parents were dead she became a guest in the home of Pierre Séverin. Mrs. Craven makes a fairly successful attempt to contrast English and French character as exemplified in the two girls. The former, vivacious and sometimes thoughtless in causing others pain, uprightness itself, but with a dash of coquetry in her nature, was inclined to look with cynicism on Anne's scruples and blind confidence in the village priest. Her most strongly marked trait, however, seemed to be irresolution, as shown, for instance, in her engaging herself to marry Guy before she had dissolved a similar contract with Lord Vivian. Anne, on the other hand, is an example of noble domesticity,—a home girl submissive to parental influence and, above all, to the dictates of her religion. Yet her love for Guy was deep and enduring although over-leavened with self-abnegation. In short, her chief fault seems to be her excessive womanliness,—all in all, the very ideal which we should expect from Mrs. Craven's imagination.

As already hinted, Guy falls a victim to the fascinations of Éveline Devereux and won her promise of marriage. Their summer dream, however, soon dispersed itself, for Éveline was quite unable to comprehend or appreciate Guy's ardent religious character. The advent of Lord Vivian caused the dissolution of a tie which had brought neither happiness. The unfortunate young Frenchman recovered slowly from the illness brought on by the interview with Lord Vivian. Pierre Séverin arrived, —the last scenes were enacted in Rome,—to accompany his young master home. Mutual explanations convinced Séverin that he had erred in separating the young people, and their union followed.

"Anne Séverin" leaves the impression that the authoress has endeavoured to weave too much material into her romance, with the result that the story becomes long drawn out and straggling. The characterisation is weak. The various individuals are calculated, too, to appeal to the sentiments rather than the intellect. They lack inevitableness, besides which

so many successive characters are introduced as to diminish and distract the reader's interest.

2. Fleurange[1]

was finished under the hospitable roof of the lady to whom it was dedicated—the Duchess Marie von Hamilton, Princess of Baden. Like the preceding work it was first published in "Le Correspondant," and after appearing in book form was crowned by the *Académie française* on August 8, 1872.

The story commences in Paris, where Fleurange's remaining parent had just died. The gladly-accepted invitation of her uncle, Professor Dornthal, to enter his family transfers the scene to Frankfort. Not one of the least merits of the book is the sympathetic picture of family life in the uncle's home. One of the constant visitors in the family was Felix Dornthal, a nephew of the Professor. Felix is the pitiable villain of the story, who, after unsuccessfully wooing Fleurange and incidentally ruining his father and uncle, disappeared, leaving the Dornthal family to extricate itself from the horrors of poverty. Even in these first chapters the Professor's son Clément—also secretly in love with his orphan cousin—begins to arouse the reader's sympathy and respect, and with the progress of the romance these develop into admiration.

Desiring to lighten the family's burdens Fleurange took a position as companion to the Princess Lamianoff. She had already met the Princess's only son George in her father's Paris home. The unavoidable intercourse of family life soon made it evident that a mutual passion had sprung up between them. But the young Comte had been engaged almost from childhood to marry a Russian lady of his own rank, besides which the Princess would never consent to such a marriage for her son. Having refused the young nobleman's offer of marriage Fleurange returned to the Dornthals at Heidelberg. Some months later news arrived that an attempt had been made on the life of the Czar, and that George had been arrested

[1] Published by Didier et Cie, Paris, 1871.

among the other conspirators, followed by his sentence of banishment for life to the Siberian mines. This gives the authoress an opportunity for a finely-conceived dramatic scene. Fleurange seeks and obtains from the Princess her consent to marry George and accompany him into his exile. The narration of the ensuing journey in mid-winter, under the conduct of the noble self-effacing Clément, is full of descriptive power. Arrived in the Russian capital the young girl proceeds to gain an audience with its ruler, but before this was accomplished the Czar had listened to another fair petitioner for George's life. His life-long *fiancée* (Vera) had begged for him to be spared, and her petition had been granted on condition that he married her—a condition to which the unstable George had apparently no pangs of conscience in agreeing. Next, the fair pleader, having heard of Fleurange's arrival, visits and obtains from her the promise to leave Russia without letting George know either of her visit or the noble intention which inspired it. At this point the authoress is dangerously near to creating an anti-climax, for her heroine has displayed splendid heroism and self-sacrifice, only to find herself in an invidious, almost ridiculous situation. This artistic pitfall is, however, skilfully avoided by directing the interest to Clément. Two years later the realisation of his steadfast fidelity caused the scales to fall from the eyes of Fleurange. Mrs. Craven succeeds in contrasting in a forceful manner the selfish love of George with that of Clément, and the steadfast passion of Fleurange with that of the more worldly Vera. The scenes, which are laid in Russia, are of special interest, as they probably record many of Mrs. Craven's personal reminiscences.

3. Le Mot de l'Énigme.[1]

The story opens with the death scene of Bianco, the wife of Messina's famous advocate, Fabrizio dei Monti. A short time before Bianco's death, her only daughter Ginevra had given her mother deep offence, which led the young girl to

[1] Published in 1874 by Didier et Cie, Paris.

believe that she had hastened her parent's death. Fabrizio restricted his daughter's liberty to the narrowest limits till her marriage with one of his clients, Lorenzo Duke of Valenzano, whose estates Fabrizio was engaged in defending against rival claimants. Among the many persons met by the young couple on their honeymoon were Donna Faustina and the Countess Stella d'Oria, both of whom become prominent figures in the latter portion of the narrative. While in Paris the young wife discovers that her husband is a confirmed gambler, a discovery which marks the beginning of their unhappy wedded life. During Lorenzo's absence at the races Ginevra visited her friend Madame de Kergy, at whose home she made the acquaintance of the distinguished traveller Gilbert de Kergy. A little later she learned that, after having lost very heavily on the race-course, her husband had gone to dine with Donna Faustina. Acting on her friends' advice she did everything possible to induce Lorenzo to leave Paris with her. On being taxed with his mis-doings he admitted that the Donna Faustina was an actress with whom he had formerly been on an intimate footing. Nevertheless, he succeeded in disarming his wife's suspicions so far that she received Faustina, who was still more successful in hoodwinking Ginevra. The intrigue continued, but Lorenzo's neglect of his wife only caused her esteem for Gilbert de Kergy to increase. Finally, they depart for Naples, where Ginevra's friendship with Donna Stella ripens. Apparently the former's married life had changed for the better. But these hopes were dashed when she saw her husband throw a bunch of jasmine in at Faustina's window during the carnival gaiety. Following Stella's advice Ginevra went with her to the *Festino* wearing a bunch of jasmine. Lorenzo approached and conversed with her under the impression that it was Faustina. Even this does not disturb the husband's callousness for he next declares his intention of accompanying Donna Faustina to Milan, where the carnival lasted a little longer. Gilbert de Kergy again appears on the scene as a regular visitor at Ginevra's soirées. In spite of his nobility of character he could

not resist the forces which drew him to Ginevra, and in a passionate letter begs her to decide, whether he shall remain by her or depart. Full of doubt and desperation she sought counsel from her step-sister, whose influence and advice, "Oublie ton cœur; ne songe qu'à ton âme," restored her to calmness, and Gilbert departed.

Meanwhile Faustina had played Lorenzo false, which, however, caused him little repentance as regards Ginevra. At last the great law-suit, which had been pending for years as to the real ownership of Lorenzo's estates, was about to be decided. He persuaded Ginevra to accompany him to Messina, but on learning that her father Fabrizio had died suddenly, Lorenzo, acting under the presentiment that his estates would be lost, travelled without her. These fears were realised and Lorenzo disappeared to begin life anew. At last Ginevra heard that he was struggling to make an existence in Paris. She pleaded to be allowed to share his misfortunes, and a new era of happiness began for them. But this was ended by the declaration of hostilities between Italy and France. Lorenzo joined the Italian army and was among the first to fall. Ginevra having refused all his advances, Gilbert de Kergy led Stella to the altar some twelve months later, while Livia, the step-sister of Ginevra, entered the cloister where the latter had already become a sister. "Ce qu'il y a de plus digne d'être montré aux hommes c'est une âme humaine."

4. Eliane.[1]

The keynote of this romance is found in the marriage customs of France and England. Mrs. Craven was, no doubt, endeavouring to prove that happy marriages could ensue,— without the *dot* system as existing in France, when these were the result of personal choice and inclination. The heroine, an orphan English girl, is introduced and maintains our interest to the end of the story. Madame de Liminge, who has adopted Eliane, succeeded in making one match, but failed in two other

[1] Published in 1882 by Didier et Cie, Paris.

attempts. Her son resolves to choose for himself, or at least to obey the dictates of his own heart. The wise mother's pride could not consent to his marrying a friendless girl like Eliane, which results in an angry rupture. Partly out of pique and partly from affection he married a young Italian girl, who only lived long enough to realise that her marriage had been the result of a glamour. Still many years of bitter trials were necessary to convince the haughty Madame de Liminge that her son had the right to marry the woman whom he loved. The book is pervaded by a high religious and moral tone, while the narrative is smoothly and effectively told.

5. Le Valbriant.[1]

In this work Mrs. Craven broke new ground in dealing with the relationship of workmen to their employers. The book contains much of the teaching with regard to social questions to be found in the writings of Vicomte Albert de Mun.[2] The following is a resumé of the story. Geoffrey de Bois d'Harlay lived in the château d'Harlay, where he had spent his life in voluntary exile since the downfall of the Bourbon cause in 1830. News arrives that his son-in-law had been murdered, thus it came about that his daughter Lucie (Madame de Livernois) comes home to be the joy of her father's old age. No doubt a pleasant change, as her marriage had been an unfortunate one. Near by was the château le Valbriant, whose master was an ardent supporter of the Napoleonic regîme. His political leanings were not his only faults in the eyes of Comte Geoffrey, for Gauthier d'Arcy had turned his castle into a factory, built up a little model township for his workers, and succeeded in establishing ideal relations between employer and employed.

Lucie was, therefore, not a little surprised on her return home to find that her father and Gauthier had become good friends. She, too, was able to renew her early friendship with

[1] Published in 1885 by Perrin et Cie, Paris.

[2] Second son of Mrs. Craven's sister Eugenie.

Gauthier, whose visits became more frequent at the château. The even tenor of their quiet lives was, however, disturbed by a visit from Baronne de Prévillers with her son and daughter. Madame la Baronne desired no less than to get her good-for-nothing son under Gauthier's influence, and to arrange a match for her daughter Jacqueline to prevent her becoming a nun. To this end Lucie was entrusted with the mission of sounding Gauthier as to whether he were inclined to marry Jacqueline. This Lucie did, but the interview ended disastrously for the mission, and concluded with Gauthier's declaration that he would leave le Valbriant for ever: "Lucie, m'entendez-vous? que je vous aime depuis votre enfance, depuis la première fois où je vous ai vue, et que cet amour ne peut cesser qu'avec ma vie."

The next evening Lucie and Jacqueline, while taking a walk, saw Gauthier's castle in flames. In rescuing the life of a child the hero nearly loses his own. Lucie arrived in time to tend the wounded man. Some time elapses and the two young Prévillers were visiting in château d'Harlay again. Walking together to le Valbriant they found the inhabitants celebrating the return of Gauthier, now a blind man. After the festivities Lucie surprised Gauthier while playing with his faithful hound, and in answer to his "Qui est là?" replied, "Je suis là, Gauthier, près de vous, pour ne vous quitter jamais, si vous le voulez bien, et si vous m'aimez encore!"

C. Miscellaneous.

From 1845 till 1855 a heated discussion raged in England, which has gained the name of the "Oxford Movement," because of the series of tracts issued from that city. Mrs. Craven, as we have already seen, was keenly interested in it although only as a spectator. But when Mr. Henry Drummond[1] vigorously attacked in Parliament the convent system, which showed signs of reviving in England, she could not suppress her indignation at a supposed injustice, and replied in a pamphlet intended only for private circulation. Twenty years later she wrote another article: "M. Gladstone et les Catholiques anglais." These two pamphlets were afterwards issued in book form under the style of

1. **"Deux Incidents de la Question Catholique en Angleterre."**[2] The first-mentioned essay, "*Un Mot de Vérité sur la Vie religieuse des Femmes*," was well received, perhaps contributing to the result that the proposed legislation against Catholics was dropped. In the preface to the "Deux Incidents" Mrs. Craven remarks: "*Mais cette loi* (Ecclesiastical Titles Bill) *demeura une lettre morte, parce que déjà cet esprit de justice était, chez le peuple anglais, plus puissant que ses préjugés.*"

The second article was a reply to Mr. W. E. Gladstone's booklet "On the Vatican decrees and their bearing on the civil allegiance of Catholics," in which "M. Gladstone se livre à une interprétation du décret de l'infaillibilité et des articles du Syllabus, de laquelle il ressort, selon lui, que les catholiques anglais ne peuvent plus être désormais de fidèles sujets de la reine et de la constitution, à moins qu'ils ne cessent d'être les fils obéissants de l'Église." This opinion Mrs. Craven endeavoured to rebut, principally by appealing to English history for instances to the contrary.

[1] *Cf.* "Dict. National Biography," vol. xvi, p. 28.

[2] Published by Didier et Cie, Paris, 1875.

The next work to be considered under this heading is,

2. Réminiscences—Souvenirs d'Angleterre et d'Italie.[1]

Only two chapters are devoted to English recollections, viz: "Broadlands" and "Bridgewater House." The former was the country seat of Lord Palmerston, where the Cravens had been guests on several occasions. One of the best things in the book may be found in this chapter, a perspicacious character sketch of Palmerston.[2] Bridgewater House, the town house of the Duke of Sutherland, affords Mrs. Craven an opportunity of recording some of her impressions of London life.

The remaining chapters are: "Une Semaine sainte à Rome" (1858); Lina; La Charité a Naples; Dans les Montagnes de la Cava.

"Lina" was the translation of an Italian manuscript given to Mrs. Craven by the child's mother, Duchess Ravaschieri. The authoress's love for the daughter of her friend is one of the tenderest incidents in her life.[3] This sketch was also published separately in book form.[4] The succeeding chapter is a review of a work written by the Duchess Ravaschieri,[5] while the last chapter gives an account of the Cravens' life in their villa in the mountains of Cava during the autumn of 1858.

3. Une Année de Meditations.[6]

This book consists entirely of extracts from Mrs. Craven's diary between the years 1852—1860. The reason for publication was to provide an income for her servant, Eliza Thorpe, in case she should outlive her mistress. This, however, was not the case. The subjects dealt with at considerable length in the first part are: Noël, Épiphanie, Prédication, Passion, Résurrection, Les Plaies de Jésus, and Pentecôte. The second

[1] Published by Didier et Cie, Paris, 1879.
[2] *Cf.* Réminiscences, p. 20.
[3] Mrs. Bishop's "Memoir," p. 156.
[4] "Lina ou Ange et Martyre." Lille: Maison Saint Joseph.
[5] Storia della Carità Napoletana, by T. F. Ravaschieri Fieschi, Naples, 1876.
[6] Published by Didier et Cie, Paris, 1881.

part contains twenty-two short homilies on the various virtues, graces and weaknesses which distinguish the Christian life. Cardinal Manning corrected the proof sheets of the English edition, translated by Mrs. M. C. Bishop.

Scattered about among the pages of "Le Correspondant" several articles are to be found which were never independently published. "*Pèlerinage de Paray-le-Monial*,"[1] an article of ten pages, records the authoress's impressions and experiences during a short stay at Paray.

"*L'Armée du Salut, et le septième centenaire de saint François d'Assise*"[2] is a sympathetic criticism of the "Salvation Army" and an account of its methods and aims. In writing this Mrs. Craven made use of two articles on the same subject by "General" William Booth and Cardinal Manning respectively.[3]

An appreciation of General G. Gordon and his book, "Reflections in Palestine," formed the contents of another of these stray sketches.[4] Finally, an unpublished fragment, "Le Chemin Parcouru,"[5] which was the commencement of Mrs. Craven's autobiography.

Before summarising Mrs. Craven's work in a short critical estimate it is well to keep in mind the amount of experience and training which she had to dedicate to literature. She had almost attained the age of sixty before choosing this field of activity, but if she had long passed the time of life at which most novelists have achieved a permanent position in the world of letters she had the advantage of a crowded life to look back upon for motives, materials and inspiration. Further, she had been able to regard life from the best point of vantage. Sprung from a noble family with splendid traditions, possessing a highly cultured and intuitive intellect, she had the advantage of friendly, often intimate, intercourse with many of

[1] *Cf.* "Le Correspondant," July 25, 1873.
[2] *Cf.* "Le Correspondant," February 25, 1883.
[3] *Cf.* "Contemporary Review," August and September, 1882.
[4] *Cf.* "Le Correspondant," June 10, 1884.
[5] Mrs. Bishop's "Memoir," p. 472.

the foremost personages of the nineteenth century. Added to this her lot afforded her opportunities of dipping into the wells of human life in many lands, while in several, her linguistic talents must have enabled her to feel perfectly at home. Without boasting, Mrs. Craven could have said:

> Much have I seen and known; cities of men
> And manners, climates, councils, governments,
> Myself not least but honoured of them all.[1]

And if she could have added with Ulysses:

> I am a part of all that I have met,

then we should be compelled to allow her a knowledge of life which many a greater writer could have envied. Nevertheless, knowing her path in life up to the time when she began to write, her wide experience and her sane judgment in human affairs, and having surveyed her succeeding literary productions,—one must confess a feeling akin to disappointment.

Her first effort, "Le Récit d'une Sœur," although not an original production in the ordinary sense of the word, received very marked recognition both in France and England.[2] But although the *Académie française* honoured her on two occasions none of her romances were so unstintedly praised as that remarkable record of sorrow and love.

The motives which inspired Mrs. Craven's pen are also an important factor in attempting to form an adequate judgment of her work. Of these there is no word of censure to utter as she simply allowed herself to be led by love to humanity and her own lofty ideals. These ideals and aims are best expressed in her own words. In a letter to the Duchess Ravaschieri, written before the completion of her first romance, "Anne Séverin," the following passage occurs: "Più leggo i romanzi vuoti, falsi, malsani, scritti da potenti ingegni, e gli altri monotoni, scolorati, publicati spesso du abili donne, romanzi che dovrebbero servire ai primi di contravveleno, più

[1] Tennyson, Ulysses.

[2] *Cf.* Émile Montégut, Histoire d'un Amour Chrétien, "Revue des deux Mondes," 1866, vol. lxii; "Edinburgh Review," vol. clxxxi, p. 315 *et seq.*

mi nasce nell' animo la fede che, tra gli uni e gli altri, vi sia una lacuna da colmare, un posto vuoto da occupare. A me sembra esservi una nota alta, pura, armoniosa, ignorata in Francia dai grandi come dai mediocri scrittori. Gl'inglesi comprendono cotesta nota e i loro capolavori in fatto di *romanzi* moderni, finora si mantengono in quel *Diapason*. Ma sarà sempre cosi? Parmi che anche lì si acceni a cader nel falso. Ebbene, per quanto le mie debolissime forze mel concederanno, io mi sforzerò di farla intendere quella nota, e se potrò incontrarmi in qualcuno, sia pure uno solo, che traendone diletto vorra ripeterla, potrò dirmi generosamente ripagata delle mie fatiche. Cotesta è innanzi a Dio la sola mia guida, nella via che mi si apre davanti." [1]

Further: "I must go on my way attempting to purify French fiction, to redeem that word love from the profanation which has made it almost unpronounceable in French, and to revive or produce some little sentiment of poetry in my dear but most 'prosaïque' Faubourg St. Germain, where (next to the other one) poetry is the most forbidden of all words."[2]

Therein Mrs. Craven expresses her purpose with becoming modesty and reserve. Nevertheless, the task of "purifying French fiction" was decidedly an ambitious undertaking, and after reviewing the last thirty years of the nineteenth century we must decline to believe that Zola and his school were in any way influenced by her endeavours. Her view that the realists reproduced only one side of human life, and that, the less lovely, is no doubt correct. But they may also reply that Mrs. Craven's works, too, only revealed one side of human nature—its nobler instincts and aspirations. Thus one feels compelled to admit the justice of Paul Bourget's classification when he places Mrs. Craven in the pious school of novelists.[3] From the material point of view her efforts were happily very successful, some of her stories having had an extensive sale.

[1] T. F. Ravaschieri, "Paolina Craven," p. 281.

[2] Mrs. Bishop's "Memoir," p. 184.

[3] Paul Bourget, Le Roman Réaliste et le Roman Piétiste, "Revue des deux Mondes," vol. cvi, p. 454 *et seq.*

Yet it would be a daring speculation to assert either that she created her reading public or robbed the realistic writers of theirs. Most probably she wrote for a public which already existed—the pious Catholic world in France—and in so doing has laid herself open to the stigma of having "written books for girls." The best which can be said of Mrs. Craven's novels is, that they are conventional romances written by a clever woman. They are well-told narratives but lack the force and inevitableness of genius, and one of their failings is want of humour. The characterisation is never powerful and sometimes feeble. Her figures are not entirely human for they are the direct outcome of her own Christian ideals—the incarnation of her religious principles and their contraries. She has sculptured no great characters either good or bad, nor has she copied with convincing force any figures from life. One feels that her characters are speaking and acting as she tells them to do; besides, in giving all the leading incidents a religious turn, which often amounts to religious bias, the novelist still further weakened her claim for a position among writers of the first rank.

In like manner her style is not distinguished by originality. She contented herself in telling her stories in fluent easy language, always vivacious and pointed but never vigorous nor floridly ornamental. Nowhere did Mrs. Craven attempt to describe the overwhelming either in the splendid or horrible, and so her language in no place rises above the genial flow of every-day life, although at times it quivers with indignation in denouncing the mean and ignoble in life. Whatever she wrote bears the impress of her gentle character, her nobility of purpose, and all is readable, even by those who differ from her in faith and judgment. She used every endeavour to leave the world better than she found it; she tried by the uprightness of her female characters to rehabilitate womanly honour which had been so besmirched by the realists, but her claim to an enduring place in the world of letters must undoubtedly rest on her work as the compiler of "Le Récit d'une Sœur."

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Lebenslauf.

Ich Thomas F. A. Smith, englischer Staatsangehöriger, protestantischer Konfession, wurde am 7. April 1875 als Sohn des Standesbeamten Edwin Owen Smith und dessen Ehefrau, geb. Smith in Ledbury, Herefordshire, England geboren. Zuerst besuchte ich die Ledbury National School, darauf die Wesleyan Boys' School, Lambeth, London, und bezog 1894 das City of London College, wo ich mich bis 1898 auf die Prüfungen für Lehramtskandidaten an den Staatsschulen vorbereitete. Die letzte dafür vorgeschriebene Prüfung bestand ich 1898, worauf ich meine Studien an der Londoner Universität (East London Technical Institute) begann, welche ich bis 1902 fortsetzte. Im letzterwähnten Jahr nahm ich eine Stellung in einer Privatschule in Nürnberg an und ließ mich, um mich weiter auszubilden, im Sommer-Semester 1905 in der hiesigen Hochschule immatrikulieren. Im September 1906 wurde ich zum Lektor des Englischen an der Erlanger Universität ernannt.